

News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

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MARKEY DEPLORES BUSH GREEN LIGHT FOR NUCLEAR WEAPONS TESTING

Lawmaker fears policy reversal at home could unleash nuclear spiral abroad

WASHINGTON, D.C. --

Today Representative Edward J. Markey (D-MA) released the following statement in response to reports that the Bush administration is considering the resumption of underground nuclear testing and the development of a new generation of low-yield nuclear weapons.

"I am deeply alarmed and profoundly disappointed to learn that the Bush administration is considering lifting the 10-year moratorium on nuclear testing," Rep. Markey stated. "How can we discourage India and Pakistan from using their nuclear weapons against each other while we're pursuing a whole new generation of weapons at home? We can only expect that other nations will follow our lead and resume their own weapons development and testing. The moratorium on nuclear testing, which was put in place by the President's father and maintained throughout the Clinton administration, has been a cornerstone of America's nonproliferation policy and has allowed us to lead the world by example."

Today the lawmaker began circulating a letter of opposition to this policy among his colleagues in the House of Representatives.

In response to reports that several senior Bush administration officials seek to remove the congressional prohibition on developing new low-yield nuclear weapons, or "mini-nukes", to destroy hardened and deeply buried targets such as bunkers and weapons caches, Rep. Markey stated, "The last thing the terror-ravaged world needs right now is a new nuclear threat. This will be devastating to the efforts over the last 20 years to reduce the number of weapons of mass destruction in America and around the world."

Rep. Markey concluded, "We should take advantage of the unprecedented world support of America following September 11 to advance the goals of nonproliferation, rather than pursuing a national policy that will surely alienate our supporters and increase the global nuclear threat."

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